

REASONS Humbly offered for Prohibiting¹⁹⁷ Lustrings and Alamodes Wrought in Foreign Parts.¹⁹¹

I. **N**otwithstanding the various Laws which have been made against the Importation of all Goods of the Growth and Manufacture of *France*, yet it is notoriously known, as hereunder demonstrated, That very great Quantities of *Alamodes*, *Lustrings*, &c. have been Imported under the Name of *Dutch* or *Italian* wrought Silks, which were no other than *French*; whereby that Kingdom have made a great Profit, and this Nation a considerable Loss.

II. It may be Judged of what concern to the Nation is the Consumption of *Lustring*, *Alamodes*, &c. by the use of *Hoods*, *Scarfs*, *Tippets*, *Peticoates*, and other uses by the Women. For supposing that of 3 Millions of Females, as there are computed to be in *England*, That only 300 Thousand use any of the said Goods, and that their Expence therein amounts one with another to Twenty Shillings *per Annum*, (which is the least that can be supposed) it Evidences an expence of 300 Thousand Pounds *sterling* yearly in those Silks. But by what is Paid, to Their Majesties for the Duties, the value consumed should be but Two or Three Thousand pounds, and consequently the Persons consuming it in *England* but Two or Three Thousand: But it manifestly appears to be infinitely greater, for the very Clergy of this Kingdom consumes Six times more.

III. This Clandestine Trade is of late Years most in the hands of *French* Papists, *Jews*, and Persons that steal the Duties of at least seven Eighthths of what is Imported, and but seldom Enter at the *Custom-House* some small quantity, and that as Fabricated in *Holland*, though its known that in Reality they are sent from *Lions* to *Flanders* and thence to *Holland*, and so into *England*.

IV. Even that small quantity which doth pay any Duty is commonly kept on purpose to be sent for *Ireland*, or the *English* Plantations to draw back most of the said Duty.

V. That to Evidence fully the greatness of the quantity of *Alamodes* and *Lustrings* that comes from *France*, a Seizure made in *Kent* the 12th. of *October* last, containing Two Packets of Ten Pieces each, marked *ML*, Number 295 and 296, shews that 2940 Pieces were Run before that Seizure, and those two Packets so siezed were Condemned as *French* Goods, having the Names of the Fabricators upon each piece, and the Seals of the City of *Lions*, than which nothing can be more convincing, except the sight of the Goods, which is offered by them that bought the same the First of *December* last at the *Custom-House*, *London*.

VI. Therefore if the Consumption of *Alamode* and *Lustrings* is granted to be no less than 300 Thousand Pounds yearly in *England*, and that according to the Book of Rates, Their Majesties Duties for the said Goods, being 17 *per Cent*. it Evidences that Their Majesties are deprived of Fifty Thousand Pounds yearly that the Custom of the said Goods amounts unto which is both True and Surprising, being proved Litterally by the *Custom-House* Books.

VII. it appears that since the Month of *March* last there hath been Imported into *England* only 780*l.* weight of the Goods aforesaid Rated at 40*s.* *per lb.* and the Duties paid amounting only to 487 *l.* 10*s.* whereof part is already drawn back, and probably before the year be out the whole shall be so too, and so little or no Duties remain to Their Majesties, to the great Loss of Their good Subjects.

VIII. As those Goods are Fabricated in *France*, and are of small Bulk and great value, there is more Reason and need to Prohibit them to Ruin the Manufacture of the Common Enemy, and encrease that of *England*, The Rather since a Total Prohibition of those Silks can give no Disatisfaction to our Allies, because it is evidently known that there are not any made in *Italy* (though they did once attempt it), neither doth *Holland* now make any quantity of *Alamodes*, &c. supplying themselves easily by Land from *France*. So that the prohibiting of all Foreign *Alamodes*, *Lustrings*, &c. is in effect no more than a Corroborating of the Act that prohibits Commerce with *France*, by taking from the Importers that Colour which they make use of that the said Goods are wrought in *Holland*, whereby they have often Evaded the Effects intended and designed by the said act; for the pretence of *Dutch Alamodes* can no longer subsist seeing that in this last Year there is hardly any Duties paid for any.

IX. Therefore by a General Prohibition, Their Majesties Revenues will much increase, in that the Royal *Lustring* Company of *England*, having a considerable Fund, have also by their Industry and Charge now brought their Work to such perfection that they make *Alamodes* and *Lustrings* as well as any made in *France*, and do now employ about 2000 poor *Weavers*, *Windsters*, *Dyers* and other Tradesmen, who otherwayes would have been Reduced to great streights, and if this Prohibition take effect, the said Company might employ five Times as many as now they do, and so work out in *England* such quantities of Raw Silks, that they will supply not only *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, and our Plantations, but also our Neighbours with *Lustrings* and *Alamodes* Fabricated by Their Majesties Subjects. So that the Duties upon the Raw Silk would amount to great Sums of Money as may be guessed by what hath already been done by the said Company, since by one Ship only they paid for their Raw Silk near 460 *l.* Custom, though the Company is in its Infancy, and none of these Duties are to be drawn back. Contrariwise, when any of their Wrought Silks are Exported they must pay a further Duty. Besides by Prohibiting Foreign *Lustrings*, *Alamodes*, &c. great Sums of Money Remitted to *France*, will be kept in *England*, whereas the Raw Silk used by the said Company comes from the Duke of *Savoy's* Dominions, and are purchased with the Woollen Manufactures Wrought in *England*, by which means there is a Reciprocal help to both.

Entries of all Foreign *Alamodes* and *Lustrings* in *England*, for which any Duties have been paid and Licences granted, since the first of *March* 1697. as appears by Publick Registers.

17 June ————— 98 *lb* weight
7 August ————— 110
14 August ————— 104
9 September ————— 62

18 September ————— 167 *lb* weight
20 November ————— 128
28 November ————— 111

780

18 December drawn back already 64 *lb* weight, and till the 28th. November next none knows what shall Remain.